(c) if so, the details thereof and what action has been taken to blacklist the Mekaster Group for suppressing fact before the DGS and D?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) M/s Mekaster International Pvt. Ltd. and M/s Mekaster Trading Corporation are currently not registered with DGS & D as Indian Agents. However, in the past, both were registered with DGS&D as Indian Agents of different foreign Principals. In the tender floated for purchase of Telemetry System, only M/s Mekaster International Pvt. Ltd., Ansal Bhavan, New Delhi had quoted. Further, no suppression of facts was observed in their tender.

Quantitative Restrictions on Handloom and Handicrafts

*555. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) on the remaining 715 items also have been removed *w.e.f.* April 1st, 2001;

(b) if so, what are these items under different categories;

(c) whether Government are considering a proposal to retain the QRs on certain items like handloom and handicrafts to protect the domestic industry; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (d) Import restrictions on 715 items have been removed with effect from 01.04.2001. The 715 items include 147 agricultural products, 331 textile products and 237 other manufactured products. However, even after removal of quantitative restriction, imports will be subject to applicable customs' duty, additional customs duty and

special additional duty and will have to be in conformity with all the national laws, rules and standards.

There is no proposal to maintain quantitative restriction on items like handlooms and handicrafts. However, for the protection of domestic industry, the Government can, if the situation so warrants, utilize the mechanism of raising the applied tariffs within the bound rates, if such a gap exists and take measures such as Anti-Dumping action, imposition of Countervailing Duties and Safeguards Actions. The imports are being closely monitored and Government is determined to ensure through the appropriate use of above mechanisms, that imports do not cause any serious injury to the domestic producers.

Low Collection of Taxes

*556. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the overall mobilisation of direct and indirect taxes was substantially below the budget target;

(b) if so, the details of the target fixed and collection made during the year; and

(c) the reasons for the low collection of taxes?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The details of the targets, fixed and collection made during the year 2000-2001 are as follows: